

# Handbook for PhD Candidates

## Table of Contents

Handbook for PhD Candidates.....	1
New at UiO? .....	2
International PhD Candidate?.....	2
Learning about Norway, Norwegian culture and Norwegian language .....	2
Structure of the PhD Program .....	3
ECTS – an introduction.....	3
Educational Component .....	4
Mandatory activities .....	5
Tailor made activities.....	5
Who decides on ECTS.....	6
ECTS: Planning, approval and registration .....	6
StudentWeb .....	6
It is not all about ECTS.....	7
Suggested PhD Milestones and Timeline.....	7
<i>For PhD with a social science perspective .....</i>	8
*in addition a progress report must be submitted every year .....	8
Annual Progress Report .....	8
Supervision.....	8
Research Ethics .....	9
IT Services for Research .....	9
Funding for Research Travel .....	10
Expectations.....	10
Completion Grant .....	10
PhD Dissertation .....	11
Language Editing/Proofreading .....	11

Submission of the Thesis.....	11
Nomination/Evaluation of the Adjudication Committee.....	11
Printing of the Thesis .....	12
Trial Lecture and Public Defence .....	12
Socializing at IMK and Beyond... ..	12
Mental Health and Stress.....	12
Health, Safety and the Environment (HSE).....	13
Speak Up .....	13
Questions? .....	13

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## New at UiO?

As a PhD fellow employed at the UiO, you have a dual role. You are enrolled on the Faculty of Humanities' PhD program (aka "student") and you are at the same time *employed* by the Department of Media and Communication. It means, you have rights and obligations both as employee **and** as a PhD candidate:

- Your rights and obligations as an UiO employee are described on the page for new employees: <https://www.uio.no/english/for-employees/employment/joining-leaving/new> . Here you will information about employee benefits, welfare, events, holidays and more.
- Your rights and obligations as a PhD candidate is described on the Faculty's program pages: <http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/new/>

## International PhD Candidate?

As an international candidate, you will get support from the University's [office supporting International Researchers \(ISMO\)](#) on most issues in connection with visa, permit, registration upon arrival, bank account. The webpage of ISMO has everything you have to know, for example:

- [how to register with Norwegian authorities](#) (very important upon arrival in Norway!)
- how to set up a [bank account](#), [visas & permits](#) and [much more](#).

## Learning about Norway, Norwegian culture and Norwegian language

If you have never been to Norway before, it might be wise to spend some time learning about the country and customs. It is also useful to learn at least some basic Norwegian.

Check the pages about [Norwegian language and culture courses for international researchers](#).

## Structure of the PhD Program

In short and speaking *very roughly*, your time spent on the PhD program at the Faculty of Humanities (further referred to as HF) will be divided between two main “bulk” activities:

- conducting your research project/writing up your thesis, researching a relatively *narrow* topic/field, which should result in a dissertation submitted by the date stipulated as the end date of your employment contract
- AND**
- being trained as a researcher, interacting with others, developing a *broader* focus and building your career: through course participation, presenting and commenting on texts on the seminars, presenting papers on the conferences and communication your research to non-academics.

All these “broader” activities are referred to as “Educational Component”. The program requires that you perform some specific activities and that they should be *ECTS-generating* (more about that below).

More details on the HF’s program structure here:

<http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/structure/index.html>

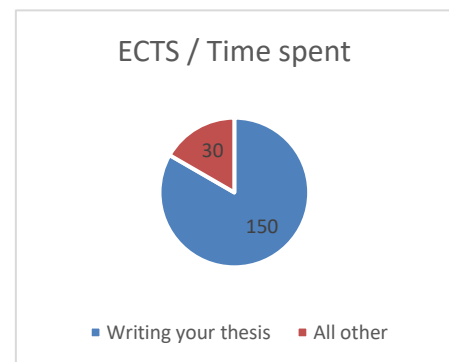
UiO’s regulations: <http://www.uio.no/english/about/regulations/research/doctoral-degree/phdforskreng.html>

## ECTS – an introduction

In Europe, every educational year is measured in ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, shortened “credits). Credits are “invented” to give us an estimate of how much time one is supposed to spend on various learning activities – irrespective of country, discipline or university.

This system is used on all levels, from BA to PhD. It works like this:

- One academic year is like a working year: you work / study approximately 1680 hours.
- 1 ECTS corresponds to 28 hours
- One academic year equals therefore 60 ECTS
- Your PhD takes 3 years: 60 ECTS x 3 = 180 ECTS



- Of these 180 ECTS, you are spending most of the time (approx. 2,5 years in total, measured as 150 ECTS) on writing your thesis; and some time (6 months in total, measured as 30 ECTS) on “broader” activities. These “broader” activities are referred to as “educational component”

Course	Credits
HFILN9001C – PhD course in Linguistics/Philology	5
HFILN9012	5
HFILN9015 – PhD course in linguistics/philology/literature	5
HFILN9020 – Oslo Summer PhD Course in Linguistics	5
HFILN9080 – Multiling Summer School	5
HFILN9085 – Multiling Winter School	5

As ECTS is an academic invention, all the courses offered by the academic institutions have normally an indication on how many ECTS they give. It is indicated either as “credits” or “ECTS”. The Norwegian term is “studiepoeng”, forkortet “stp.”

## Educational Component

Put simply, it means that **you are expected to carry out a certain number of activities in some specific categories (in 2022, five categories)**. There is a number attached to each category – sum of credits allowed, min and max. In total, all these activities should sum up to **30 credits**.

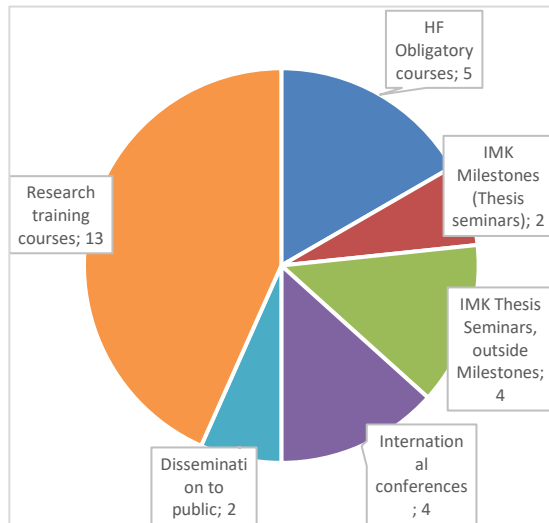
So, you are expected to do the following:

- 1) take HF *obligatory* introductory courses (Faculty, presently 5 credits)
- 2) take *research training courses* at the UiO or elsewhere (in total, minimum 8 and max 13 credits)
- 3) present and comment on parts of thesis on “*thesis seminars*” (in total, minimum 6 and maximum 8 credits). This includes three obligatory milestone seminars (inaugural, midway and final)
- 4) disseminate your research to academics at *international conferences* (in total, minimum 4 and maximum 6 credits); and
- 5) *communicate* your research to non-academics (in total, minimum 2 and maximum 3 credits).

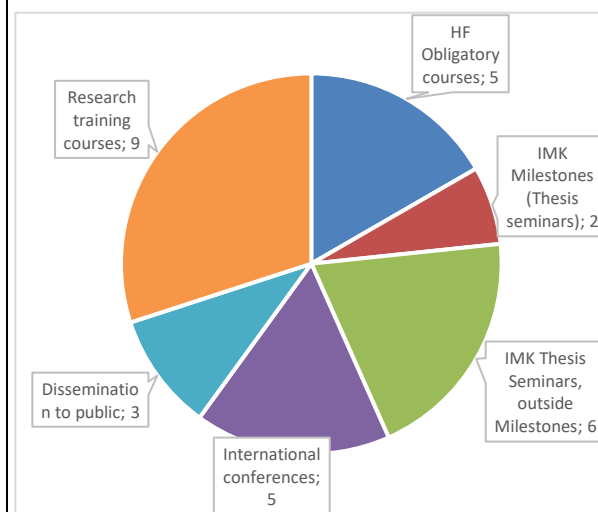
These categories are set, and no other categories can be added. Some of the activities in some categories are mandatory, but some are at your own choice. It gives you a lot of flexibility and possibility to tailor your learning to your needs.

Note that categories have a minimum and a maximum requirement. It means that earning a maximum in one of the categories will leave less “space” in some other categories, and vice versa. For example, you can max out your courses category. Then it will look like Alternative A. Or, you spend more time on conferences and dissemination, “taking” credits from courses (Alternative B).

Alternative A: More courses (13 credits)



Alternative B: Less courses (9 credits)



### Mandatory activities

- Three obligatory courses on the Faculty level (5 ECTS). The dates are set by the Faculty every semester. When you have taken them all, this category is done (obligatory courses)
- Three obligatory milestone thesis seminars at the IMK level («[Inaugural](#)» 1ECTS, «[Midway](#)» 0 ECTS, «[Final](#)» 1 ECTS). The dates will be discussed with you.
- Attending 2-4 IMK thesis seminars: we expect you to present your work at least twice (1 ECTS x 2) and comment on others' work at least twice (1 x 2 ECTS). These seminars are arranged every semester. It is possible to present and comment during one and the same seminar.

### Tailor made activities

#### *International conferences*

We expect you to present your research (papers) on international conferences. It should happen at least on two occasions (if you present on a peer-reviewed conference), or at least on 3-4 occasions (if conferences do not involved any peer-review process). It is up to you which conferences to choose.

#### *Communicating your research*

This category is called "Dissemination". You should communicate your research to non-academics on at least 2 occasions (1 ECTS x 2). Time spent on preparation and presenting altogether should be sufficient to justify 1 ECTS (28 hours). Examples of such communication are op-eds, public lectures, guest lectures in a school etc. It is up to you to decide on how you will disseminate.

#### *Courses*

This category is called "Research training courses". You should find and take relevant courses at the UiO or elsewhere. The courses should be on the PhD level (it will be indicated in the course description) and cover, for example, methods, theory, specific themes etc. Courses offered by recognized Universities are always «rated» with ECTS, and it can be anything from 1 ECTS (one-two days course) to 10 ECTS

(participation in a summer school). For this reason, it is impossible to say how many courses you should take. However, we require that you have a minimum of 8 ECTS and a maximum of 13 ECTS in the “course category”.

Read more about the educational component here:

**IMK:** <http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/structure/organisation-at-imk/>

**HF:** <http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/structure/index.html>

### Who decides on ECTS

If a course is offered by the UiO or other academic institution, the ECTS number is normally indicated on the course page.

For other activities, which do not have an official number of ECTS assigned to them (such as when you present a paper on a conference), the Program has developed a set of evaluation criteria. These criteria are published on the Department’s pages, and you should familiarize yourself with those when planning your activities: <http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/structure/organisation-at-imk/>

### How are ECTS registered and StudentWeb

At the UiO, all the basic information about your participation in the PhD program is registered in the internet service called [StudentWeb](#). Here you can also see the history of your activities and credits earned.

In order to credits to appear in your StudentWeb plan, you should send necessary information about your ECTS generating activities to your PhD responsible. You do it by [filling out the credit approval form](#).

### ECTS: Things to remember

Remember this

- When planning to attend an activity, make sure that it is on the right level and quality in relation to your needs. As for the conferences, make sure it is not a predatory conference. Always discuss your plans with your supervisor.
- If unsure, or an activity is relatively new / unknown, consult the PhD coordinator in advance. Do it either by e-mail or by [filling out the form](#) for credit approval – before the activity’s start (**pre-approval**). This applies also for any activities recommended by your supervisor(s).
- If it is a well known activity (big conference, UiO course with clear ECTS stated), you can send a request for credit approval postfactum.
- If you applied for pre-approval via form, remember to send an email to the PhD coordinator after the activity has taken place – to confirm that you have been there / done that. It is only when this confirmation is received, that the activity will be registered.

Please also make sure to keep all the documentation until you defend your thesis.

**It is not all about ECTS...**

It is important to understand that though earning 30 credits (with a required number of credits in each category) is obligatory, you are free to carry out any other activities, also those which are not ECTS-generating. For instance, you might find useful taking what we call “generic” courses (academic writing etc) or presenting your papers on more occasions than required. However, make sure you don’t overstretch yourself. You only have three years – so make sure that all you do is relevant for your thesis and your career.

**PhD Milestones and Timeline**

Candidates are to decide on their timeline in cooperation with their supervisors. However, there are obligatory milestones and obligatory reporting, as shown in the illustration below.

	Year 1		Year 2			Year 3			Year 4	
Months from Day 1	0-6 months	12 months	12-18 months	18 months	24 months	24-30 months	30 months	36 months	5-7 months after submission	
<b>IMK seminars and reports</b>	IMK Inaugural Seminar			IMK Midway Seminar			IMK Final Seminar (Mock Disputation)			Public defence
	IMK Introductory seminar (ADM)	progress report by the end of the calendar year			progress report by the end of the calendar year		progress report by the end of the calendar year	Planning the completion grant + registering for Pedagogy courses		Dr degree award by the end of the year
<b>HF</b>	Three HF Obligatory Courses (preferably taken within the 1st year)							Thesis Submission		
<b>Grade-giving activities</b>	Participate in at least 1 thesis seminar in addition to Inaugural. Start looking and taking courses you need. Co-supervisor (?)		Receive and give feedback on IMK thesis seminars. Courses. Writing out. Conferences			Remaining courses. Conferences. Dissemination. Thesis seminars.			Uniped-courses, teaching, career building	
<b>Thesis writing</b>	Refining the draft, reading up	Theory choice, method choice, data collection	Theory choice, method choice, data collection, data analysis - and, first articles?			Data analysis complete, focus on writing, especially "kappa".	Focus on kappa; writing, wrapping up and proof-reading			
									For internal IMK fellows: completion grant (6 months or 1 year) including teaching, pedagogy courses, career planning	

\* Your way to the PHD can look different from this presentation - except for the obligatory milestones in red and progress reporting in yellow

Below are two examples of timelines that have proven successful for others.

*For Phd in Humanities*

<b>By one month:</b>	Assignment of supervisor(s); drafting timetable; introductory meeting
<b>By three months:</b>	IMK inaugural seminar
<b>By the first semester:</b>	HF mandatory courses( Introductory seminar; Theory of Knowledge; Ethics: 5 ECTS) are completed
<b>By six months:</b>	Research question is determined
<b>By the end of year 1:</b>	Introduction and two chapters of the thesis are written (alternatively for a paper-based thesis one paper is drafted)
<b>By 18 months:</b>	Mid-way seminar; one participation in an international conference
<b>By the end of year 2:</b>	Two, three or four further chapters are written depending on the thesis structure, i.e. 75% of the thesis; we suggest that all 30 ECTS are completed by this time

<b>By 30 months:</b>	Plan completion grant (if applicable); make sure that you have accumulated the necessary credits for your education component
<b>By 30 months/33 months:</b>	Final seminar
<b>By the end of year 3:</b>	Submission of the thesis

*For PhD with a social science perspective*

<b>By one month:</b>	Assignment of supervisor(s); drafting timetable; introductory meeting
<b>By three months:</b>	IMK inaugural seminar
<b>By the first semester:</b>	HF mandatory course Introductory seminar ( HF mandatory course) is completed
<b>By six months:</b>	Research question is determined
<b>By the end of year 1:</b>	Introduction and one chapter of the thesis are written (alternatively for a paper-based thesis one paper is drafted); Theory of Knowledge, Ethics (HF mandatory courses) are completed // If applicable, field work and data is collected.
<b>By 18 months:</b>	Mid-way seminar; one participation in an international conference
<b>By the end of year 2:</b>	Two, three or four further chapters are written depending on the thesis structure, i.e. 75% of the thesis; we suggest that all 30 ECTS are completed by this time.
<b>By 30 months:</b>	Plan completion grant (if applicable); make sure that you have accumulated all the necessary credits for your education component
<b>By 30/33 months:</b>	Final seminar
<b>By the end of year 3:</b>	Submission of the thesis

\*in addition a progress report must be submitted every year

## Annual Progress Report

PhD candidates and supervisors are required to report to IMK each year by the end of the year (dates to be informed). The reports aim at assessing the progression of the candidates, the relationship between the supervisor(s) and to offer both candidates and supervisors an avenue to give feedbacks.

Read more here: <https://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/new/#toc7>

## Supervision

All PhD candidates at the University of Oslo should normally have two supervisors, main supervisor at the IMK and co-supervisor (either at the IMK or elsewhere). Your main supervisor is appointed at the time of admission. As for the appointment of co-supervisor, this is something to be discussed and agreed upon between you and supervisor first, and then with the Head of PhD research.



The supervisory relationship is regulated by contract and ethical guidelines. The department appoints supervisors and signs contracts with external supervisors (if applicable).

In the events of problems: it is important that a poorly functioning supervisor relationship not be allowed to persist for any length of time. If the supervision does not function satisfactorily, contact your PhD Coordinator immediately.

Performance assessments and talks with the PhD Coordinator and annual reporting from candidate and supervisor shall contribute to ensuring that the quality of the supervision is good.

Read more here: <http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/supervision/index.html>

## Research Ethics

UiO maintains a strong focus on research ethics, and has prepared a special plan of action for preventing academic dishonesty. The individual researcher has an independent responsibility to ensure that their research proceeds in accordance with good research practice and recognised scientific and ethical principles, and in compliance with the regulatory framework.

Familiarize yourself with:

- [The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities \(NESH\)](#)
- [UiO's 10 commandments for ethical practice in research](#)
- [Rules about privacy protection\(in Norwegian\)](#)
- [Quality assurance of education](#)
- Read more [here](#)

## Publications: acknowledgments

If you publish articles during your PhD, please always remember to state your affiliation with the Department and the UiO in the article. It applies also for candidates admitted on the HF program, but employed elsewhere.

Furthermore, if you are employed in an externally funded project, you should include an acknowledgement to the funder at the very end of the article, stating the name of the funder and the project number (ask your PI / Supervisor if unsure).

## CRISTIN – registering publications and outreach

In Norway, we have a special system – [Cristin](#) - where researchers register *all* their publications and outreach activities. However, when employed by an institution, you are **obliged** to register your *academic* publications (that is academic articles, book chapters and books). This is because publications are an important achievement indicator for every academic institution.

However, we recommend that you register all publications, guest lectures and conferences in Cristin – not only the academic ones. If you do it regularly, they will automatically appear on your UiO profile page. An updated profile page will make you visible on a Google search, and is the first place potential employers / academic partners will look.

NB! If you are employed in an RCN funded project, you should register all outreach activities in Cristin – they will then be automatically transferred to the RCN for reporting purposes.

About Cristin – with all the step-by-step instructions on how to register various activities:

<https://www.uio.no/english/for-employees/support/research/publication/after-publication/cristin/>

## IT Services for Research

Familiarize yourself with the possible research platforms and IT research services available at UiO:

<http://www.uio.no/english/services/it/research/>

## Funding for Research Travel

PhD Candidates at the Faculty of Humanities may apply for funding for research travel lasting 1–6 months. Deadline for applications: **1 December and 1 June**. Plans for a stay abroad must be reported to your department's research advisor and Phd Coordinator.

PhD candidates employed in the RCN projects can apply for funding to the RCN.

Read more on how to [apply for funding for research travel](#).

## Expectations

PhD Candidates can expect *academic guidance* from their supervisor(s) and the PhD Coordinator. They can also contact the research consultant on any administrative issues relating the PhD program.

The Department of Media and Communication expects candidates to be *active members* in the activities of the department and to complete their PhD *within the three-year period in an independent manner*. The Department also encourages PhD students to engage with each other to *create a dynamic and friendly research community* for young scholars in the department.

## Completion Grant

PhD Candidates employed at the Faculty of Humanities who submit their doctoral dissertation for assessment with a written recommendation from their supervisor within 3 years or 3 ½ years after the start of their PhD position, will be offered, respectively, a 12 or 6 month completion grant.

The purpose of the scheme is to encourage the completion of the PhD program within 3 years and to increase the number of completed doctoral degrees in the Faculty. The aim of the Completion Grant is also to broaden the candidates' skills (for example: [basic pedagogical training/universitetspedagogisk basiskompetanse](#)).

Candidates who wish to receive a Completion Grant and believe they will submit their dissertation within the time limits, *must notify their department* (represented by the Research Consultant or Head of Department) in writing at least 6 months in advance of the expected date of submission.

The details of each Candidate's Completion Grant period plan must be agreed upon with the Head of Department. A meeting between the candidate, PhD Coordinator, research consultant and Head of Department will be organized for the planning of the Completion Grant period.

Read more here:

<https://www.uio.no/for-ansatte/arbeidsstotte/fa/utdanning/hf/stipendiater/gjennomfoeringsstipend/completiongrant.html>

<http://www.uio.no/for-ansatte/arbeidsstotte/fa/utdanning/hf/stipendiater/gjennomfoeringsstipend/imk/> (in Norwegian)

## PhD Dissertation

Refer to HF general guidelines on the PhD thesis: <https://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/thesis-evaluation/guidelines/>

## Language Editing/Proofreading

Phd candidates are expected to use their operating funds for covering the costs relating to the language editing and proofreading of their PhD thesis. Therefore, make sure you have set aside a sufficient sum (10.000 NOK) to that purpose.

## Submission of the Thesis

Make sure you read the latest updated guidelines on that: <http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/thesis-evaluation/submission/>

## Nomination/Evaluation of the Adjudication Committee

When you have submitted your thesis and applied for assessment, the faculty will appoint an adjudication committee, taking into consideration a proposal sent by the Department. You will be asked whether you have objections to the committee. After the appointment, the committee has 10 weeks (longer if the period coincides with public holidays) to assess your thesis.

\*Note that the opponent from your final seminar cannot be part of your adjudication committee.

<https://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/thesis-evaluation/evaluation/>

## Printing of the Thesis

Visit UiO website for more information on how to order the printing of your thesis:

<http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/thesis-evaluation/printing/>

## Trial Lecture and Public Defence

The PhD examination consists of the trial lecture and the public defence. Read more about the procedure and the documents to be submitted here:

<http://www.hf.uio.no/english/research/phd/thesis-evaluation/trial-lecture-defence/index.html>

## Socializing at IMK and Beyond...

Join [PolKom](#) Monday lunch seminars.

Join IMK **common lunch** on Wednesday.

Join [Media Aesthetics](#) for a workshop / [arbeidsseminar](#).

Get in touch with relevant [research groups](#) at IMK (or elsewhere).

## Mental Health and Stress

Do you experience stress? Are you feeling isolated?

If you feel overwhelmed by the demands of the PhD or lonely in your pursuits – both of which happen to almost every PhD student at some point – please do not hesitate to make an appointment to talk to someone. You have a few options both at UiO, as well as privately:

- [Occupational Health Service Unit](#) of the University could help you. UiO also offers from time to time courses on stress management, check online: <http://www.uio.no/english/for-employees/competence/overview-courses/personal-development/>.
- Remember that UiO allows you to spend up to 1.5 hours per week of your working hours on **physical exercise**, and that you can become a member of [SIO Athletica](#), which has five fitness centers around Oslo, for reduced rates. Regular exercise can also help keep you feeling grounded and reduce stress.
- We want to ensure that your working environment is safe and comfortable. You can bring up any **social or psychological problems** relating to your work situation with your *verneombud* and/or your PhD advisor.

- Your own **doctor** (fastlege) could also refer you to a psychologist, but this can take some time to get approved.

**Useful reads to help you manage your time when you feel overwhelmed:**

- [10 surprising time management strategies to help you Graduate](#)
- [Where do the hours go?](#) : Graduate students and procrastination experts share their best time-management tips.
- [The best books to tackle most common PhD problems](#)
- [The Thesis Whisperer](#)

## Health, Safety and the Environment (HSE)

User friendly information in case of emergency situations: <http://www.uio.no/english/about/hse/>

## Speak Up

UiO shall be a safe and open working environment for everyone. Use UiO speak-up system to report sexual harassment or other censurable conditions. Students are also encouraged to use the system to report on their learning environment. <http://www.uio.no/english/about/hse/speak-up/index.html>

## Questions?

Check the information on the University website, get in touch with your colleagues at the Department and do not hesitate to contact us:

**Head of Phd Program at the IMK:** Petter Bae Brandtzæg

**PhD coordinator:** Katerina Houben

Finally, we would love your feedback at any time on how we can further facilitate a good research environment for your PhD studies.

*Good luck 😊 !*